

**Pedestrian Advisory Council  
Technical Subcommittee  
Construction Barriers – Findings and Recommendations**

**Construction Barriers Project Background and Activities**

During 2014 the PAC explored barriers to pedestrian movement resulting from large construction projects. The purpose was to capture examples of good and bad practices where construction efforts inhibit pedestrian movement and safety and, in particular, where ADA compliance is affected. The goal was to produce a memo to the City of Austin Right of Way Management Division<sup>1</sup> (ROW team) with observations and recommendations for how to improve pedestrian safety and mobility near construction projects throughout the city. The PAC's short investigation included the following activities:

- Researched Austin policies to identify similarities or disparities in language resulting in challenging construction practices;
- Researched good examples of short information leaflets with check lists appropriate for contractors and public outreach on the issues;
- Collected photos of construction projects, which may serve as either good or bad examples to further dialogue (as seen in "Photograph Examples of Construction Barriers" exhibit below);
- Discussed the new Austin 3-1-1 smart phone app<sup>2</sup> and telephone call reporting with the ROW team to identify reporting and/or data collection challenges; and
- Identified how case numbers allow the ROW team to track 311 examples.

**Recommendations**

The Pedestrian Advisory Council supports additional training opportunities and certification of construction contractors to help to prevent challenges before they occur. Although all construction sites are required to have a licensed superintendent in charge of changes to the right of way, sub-consultants working on the site are not required to have such training. Therefore even if the superintendent has put in place all of the necessary actions for maintaining pedestrian mobility in the right of way, issues may still occur. This could in part be solved by additional education opportunities through a City of Austin certification program which will lend greater awareness, tracking and prevention of construction barriers on large projects in the city.

Currently there are challenges with using the Austin 3-1-1 smart phone app to successfully direct all construction barrier/obstruction issues in the right of way to the ROW team. The PAC shall continue to identify examples of both good and bad construction practices across the city as this information will be useful for ROW Division with their enforcement, site signage and education programs targeting construction contractor and other interested audiences. Barriers to pedestrian mobility will be reported to 3-1-1 using the phrase "obstruction in the Right of Way" to assist the 3-1-1 staff in getting the case to the ROW team. The PAC understands that these examples may be used to target raising awareness among the community at large about 3-1-1 reporting of construction barriers in the future.

**Appendix**

**PAC Overview**

It is the purpose of the Pedestrian Advisory Council to *"advise City of Austin on pedestrian planning, design, funding, education, and enforcement efforts regarding the creation, maintenance and operation of pedestrian facilities in order to ensure a safe and enjoyable circulation for both commuting and recreation within the City of Austin. The PAC's goal is to ensure sensitivity to pedestrian issues in the design and implementation of all public and private projects impacting pedestrians."*<sup>3</sup>

**Technical Subcommittee Overview**

The Technical Subcommittee investigates issues requiring technical knowledge or of a technological nature in support of the main interests of the PAC.

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<sup>1</sup> The City of Austin Right of Way Management Division provides traffic planning and coordination for all activities in the right of way in order to ensure public safety and mobility (<http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/right-of-way-management>). The City's right of way is typically the street surface, sidewalks and grassy areas between pavement and property lines.

<sup>2</sup> For more information regarding the Austin 3-1-1 smart phone app, please see <http://www.austintexas.gov/311app>.

<sup>3</sup> Bylaws of the Pedestrian Advisory Council (Adopted April 7, 2014): <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=208280>

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**Additional Reference(s):**

- U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access: Best Practices Design Guide: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/publications/sidewalk2/sidewalks210.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/sidewalk2/sidewalks210.cfm)
- Texas Transportation Institute, Texas A&M University System, Investigating Pedestrian Components in Temporary Traffic Control. <http://d2dtl5nnlpfr0r.cloudfront.net/tti.tamu.edu/documents/0-5237-1.pdf>
- The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (TMUTCD). <http://www.txdot.gov/government/enforcement/signage/tmutcd.html>
- Building a True Community issued by the U.S. Access Board's Public Rights-of-Way Access Advisory Committee: <http://www.armor-tile.com/articles/pdfs/public-rights-of-way.pdf>
- Texas Accessibility Standards - <http://www.tdlr.texas.gov/ab/ab.htm>

**Photograph Examples of Construction Barriers**



*Example 1*



*Example 2*



*Example 3*



*Example 4*



*Example 5*



*Example 6*